

THE HIGHLANDS ACTIVITIES

1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2021

THE OLMOTI CLIMB

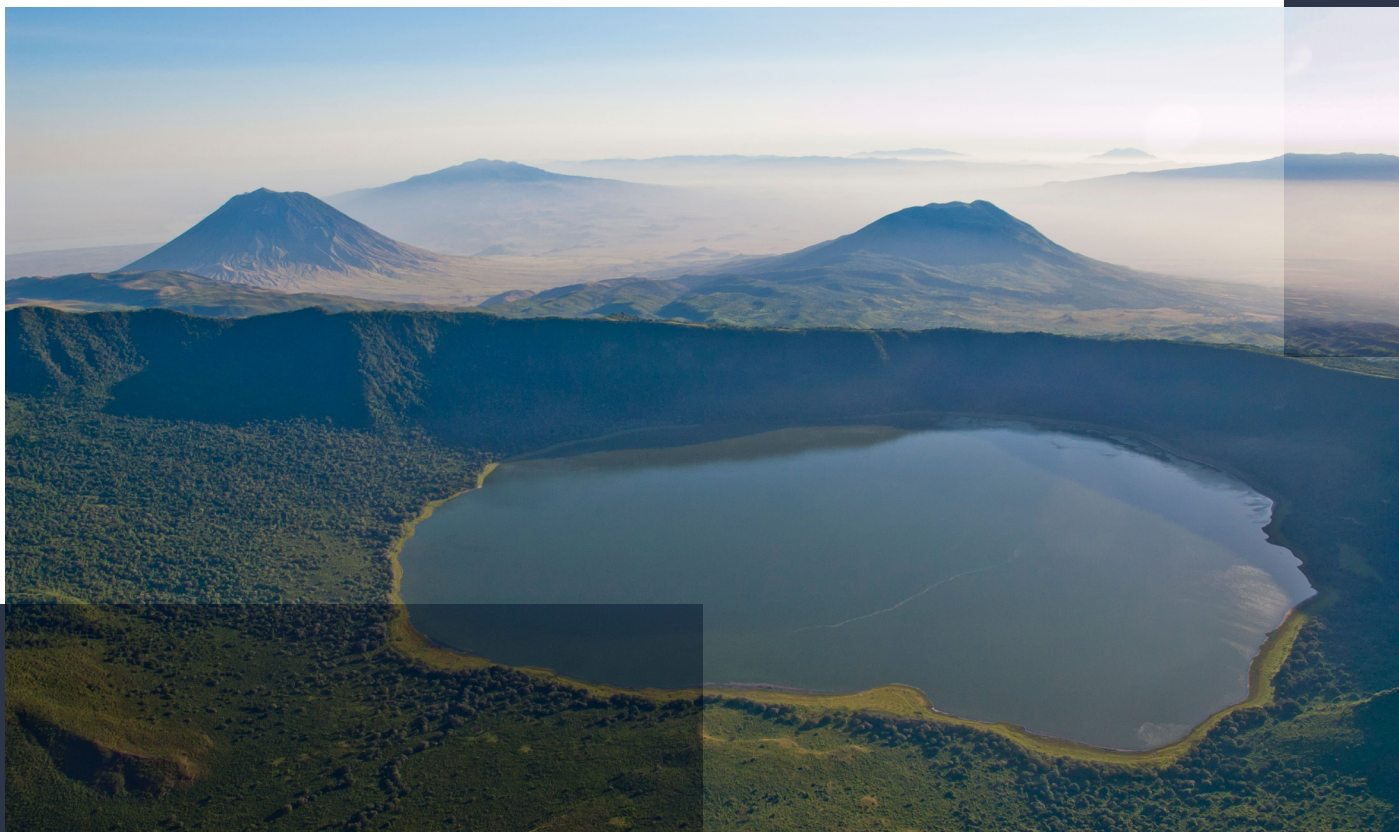
Starting directly from The Highlands Camp, the Olmoti crater climb follows an ancient Maasai cattle trail up a gentle ascent through mountain forest, grassland and rocky outcrops. The 2-3 hour walk (roundtrip) offers outstanding birding, a large array of butterflies and is a botanist's dream, with varying vegetation and a variety of splendid fern species. At the summit, guests are treated to a stunning view of the Olmoti crater.

Practical information:

- The hike begins directly from The Highlands camp.
- Duration: 2 – 3 hours (roundtrip).
- Children from 12 years old are allowed.
- Can be done after a visit to the crater or on the day of arrival if in camp before 3 pm.
- Suitable for most fitness levels (guests do not have to be serious mountain climbers to participate).

Please note that the hike follows a wild route that is home to buffalo, zebra, bushbuck, leopard and hyena, and has occasional elephant passing through.





THE EMPAKAAI DESCENT

The stunning but relatively unknown Empakaai Crater lies some 40 kilometre northeast of its famous neighbour, the Ngorongoro Crater. From The Highlands camp, the drive to the crater takes roughly 1 hour and 15 minutes through the beautiful Bulbul Depression and offers the chance to see a variety of animals. On arrival at Empakaai, guests will be treated to splendid views of the Empakaai Crater as well as a glimpse of the Oldoinyo Lengai, Tanzania's most active volcano. Here guests will join an Ngorongoro Conservation Area ranger and begin the 30-45 minute descent into the crater through thick, mountainous forest. Once on the crater floor, the lake offers superb birding and the chance to see the famous flamingos. The walk back to the vehicle on the crater rim will take around 1 hour and 30 minutes, with the chance to see big game (buffalo, hyena and elephant).

Practical information:

- Asilia can exclusively offer the descent as a half-day excursion, due to the location of The Highlands camp.
- Can be easily combined with the Olmoti climb or a cultural visit to make a full day activity.
- The drive to Empakaai offers an excellent chance to witness local Maasai life and provides a much fuller understanding and appreciation of Ngorongoro as a whole area.
- Packed picnic lunch can also be arranged and is included in the GP and FB rate.

Wildlife highlights:

- Opportunities to spot zebra, gazelle, ostrich, wildebeest and the occasional cheetah during the drive from The Highlands to Empakaai.
- The multitude of flamingoes that form a salmon-pink band around the lakeshore is an extraordinary sight. Guests will have the opportunity to watch them parade en masse, feed and most remarkably, fly (Numbers of flamingoes do fluctuate throughout the year).

Additional info:

- The caldera (collapsed volcano) itself is a remarkable sight for guests to enjoy. Dramatic cliffs encircle the salt lake some 300 metres below, and with colours ranging from sparkling turquoise to pewter depending on the time of day and the mood of the cloudscape, it truly is an unmissable sight and highlight of any trip.
- The lake is 6 kilometres in diameter and takes around 4 hours to walk around.
- Children from 12 years old are allowed for the Empakaai Hike.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Guests will have the opportunity to join a Maasai staff member on a visit to a local community. Many of our staff members are drawn from the surrounding communities and are always eager to share their experiences, providing a richer understanding of the culture that defines this corner of East Africa. Guests will be invited to a Maasai boma to gain an insight into the traditional cattle-herding practices and school visits will also be available depending on the time of year.

Practical information:

- Walking time to the village is around 30 minutes (driving is also available).
- Visits can be made daily at 4 pm.

THE CRATER DESCENT

Guests will begin the 40-minute journey from The Highlands to the Ngorongoro Crater in the early morning, following the rising sun to the crater rim. The drive offers the opportunity to spot zebra interspersed with the Maasai cattle herds and on a clear day, a magnificent view of the Ngorongoro Crater. The fertile grasslands soon turn to beautiful mountain forests as the descent from the rim begins, and guests will spend the morning exploring the vast 300 km² crater floor with the opportunity to spot the Big 5 and the many roaming predators. Lunch will be served on the crater floor (options available).

Practical information:

- The drive from The Highlands to the Ngorongoro Crater rim will take roughly 40 minutes, with the opportunity to spot zebra and other plains game on route.
- This is a full day activity and lunch on the crater floor will be included.
- Hot lunch in a private picnic site on the crater floor is available (Included in GP price, FB price US\$50 per person). Please note the hot lunch is for a max number of 8 pax, and pre-booking is essential.
- Packed picnic lunch can also be arranged and is included in the GP and FB rate.

Wildlife highlights:

- The crater is home to one of the largest wildlife densities in the world, offering guests the chance to see the Big 5 and numerous predators and large mammals.

